DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 323 026 PS 019 039

AUTHOR	Hibpshman, Terry
TITLE	A Review of the Parent and Child Education (PACE) Program.
INSTITUTION	Kentucky State Dept. of Education, Frankfort. Office of Research and Planning.
REPORT NO	TAC-B-20
PUB DATE	Apr 89
NOTE	22p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Failure; Compensatory Education; Educational Innovation; Expectation; Intergenerational Programs; Literature Reviews; Parent Attitudes; *Parent Education; Parent Influence; *Parenting Skills; Prevention; Program Descriptions; *Program Effectiveness; *Program Evaluation; *Research Needs
IDENTIFIERS	*Kentucky; *Parent and Child Education Project; Program Characteristics; Research Results

ABSTRACT

This review of the Parent and Child Education (PACE) program provides a discussion of literature that supports the PACE model, data analysis about the program, and suggestions for improving the design of program evaluation. Begun in Kentucky in 1986, the program is designed to change attitudes of parents in disadvantaged families who undervalue education and enable these parents to better serve as educational role models and teachers of their children. Early evaluations of the program demonstrated its effectiveness. Information concerning participating adults and children that was provided by programs to the Kentucky Department of Education was analyzed. Findings of various investigations show that PACE met some of its initial objectives, specifically those relating to adult participant outcomes and the implicit objective of changing parents' aspirations for their children's educational outcomes. The data on children collected by PACE produced inconclusive results, probably because it is too early to expect the program to have clear-cut effects on the children. It is argued that the program needs an evaluation effort that compares PACE outcomes with those that could have been expected had PACE not been available. Evaluation of the program on the basis of short-term indicators will not answer questions about its success. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

PS

T12-3-20

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED323026

Kentucky Department of Education
Office of Research and Planning

A REVIEW OF THE PARENT AND CHILD EDUCATION (PACE) PROGRAM

April 1989

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Terry Hibpshman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Terry Hibpshman
Division of Research

PS 019039

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Contents

Executive Summary iii

Introduction 1

Literature Review 5

Existing Evaluation of the PACE Program 8
- The 1987 Yun Kim study 8
- The Kim Townley study 10
- The 1989 Yun Kim study 11
- Recent data analysis 12
- Has PACE met its goals? 22
- Other findings 26

Development of a research design 31
- Factors potentially influencing PACE effects 34
- General research strategy 35
- Research hypotheses 35
- Development of additional descriptive measures 38

Conclusions 41

References 42

Tables and Charts

Pre- and posttest scores, Yun Kim 1989 study 12
PACE adult age distribution 13
PACE adult number of years out of school 13
PACE adult distribution of last grade completed 14
PACE adult distribution of length of stay 14
Distribution of number of children of PACE adults 15
Current status of adults exited from PACE 16
Pre- and posttest scores, Adult Education database 17
Pre- and posttest score cumulative distribution 17
Number and proportion of adults obtaining GED by site 18
Exit reasons, PACE-submitted data 19
Exit reasons, Adult Education dadabase 19
Current enrollment of former PACE children 20
Income source of adult PACE participants 20
Median grade completed for individuals over 25, Kentucky and nationally, 1940-1980 28
Crosstabulation of exit reason by presence of reading posttest scores, Adult Education database 30
Average number of absences, dropouts and high school completers, from Williams, 1985 33

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This review of the Parent and Child Education (PACE) program requested by the Department of Education's Division of Community Education provides a discussion of the professional literature that supports the PACE model, a discussion of past and recent data analysis about the program, and some suggestions for improvement in evaluation design.

The PACE program is based on widely accepted ideas about the relationship between family characteristics and children's educational and social outcomes. An extensive literature shows that parental behaviors and attitudes are associated with children's vocational aspirations, which are related to their educational achievement. Based on this literature PACE believes that there is an "intergenerational cycle of undereducation" in some families that results in children's educational failure. PACE sees this problem as a major contributor to Kentucky's status as a state with a low rate of high school completion and seeks to break this cycle by changing the family factors that are believed to perpetuate it. In particular PACE hopes to change parental attitudes that undervalue education and to cause parents to serve as better educational role models and teachers of their children.

Initially PACE lacked funding for program evaluation, but program staff were concerned about demonstrating program effectiveness. They employed individuals from two programs at the University of Kentucky to perform evaluation studies. These studies had unavoidable but serious methodological problems that limit them as demonstrations of PACE effectiveness. These methodological problems are due principally to lack of comparison data to show how the same individuals would have fared had PACE not been available, as well as problems in measurement procedures. The studies do provide some descriptive and anecdotal information about PACE.

Information about the program's adult participants is routinely collected in the Department of Education's 240 system Adult Education data base, and analyses provided additional descriptive measures of PACE performance. PACE projects provided information about adults and children, which was also analyzed.

The results of these various investigations show that PACE met some of its initial objectives, specifically the objectives relating to adult participant outcomes (achieving a GED, improving by two grade levels,

or completing one program cycle), and the implicit objective of changing parents' aspirations for their children's educational outcomes. The studies do not evaluate other objectives of the program. The information available about some objectives seems to show that they have not been met, but this information is so flawed that it cannot be viewed as conclusive. The PACE-collected child data produced inconclusive results, probably because it is too early to expect the program to have clear-cut effects on the children.

The PACE program needs an evaluation effort that is capable of demonstrating its effectiveness and cost-efficiency. The design of this system must compare PACE outcomes with expected outcomes had PACE not been available to the same population. This requires that the outcomes of similar individuals involved in other programs be compared to those of PACE participants. The research literature on educational disadvantage demonstrates that PACE is a reasonable design to deal with well-known problems, but this does not guarantee that PACE services will actually result in the desired outcomes. Demonstration of the value of PACE requires that certain causal relationships be demonstrated between PACE services and outcomes.

It is very important to distinguish between characteristics of PACE and of other traditional services to the same population. PACE, neither an adult basic education program nor an early childhood education program, belongs in the category of "family support programs", and evaluation efforts need to address appropriate outcomes. It is particularly important in thinking about PACE evaluation to remember that expected PACE outcomes will occur over a period of years due to a change in family factors related to achievement. Evaluation of the program on the basis of short-term indicators will not answer questions about its success.

Adequate evaluation of PACE effectiveness requires that a series of research studies be conducted beginning this year. These studies would evaluate the effect of particular services included in the PACE program and the effect of PACE services taken together. These studies should compare PACE participants to similar individuals who were served by other programs or not served by any program.

PACE is a reasonable design, but reasonable designs sometimes fail to accomplish their objectives. Since the PACE model is being replicated across the country, Kentucky must demonstrate the value of the PACE model. This demonstration requires a better program evaluation effort.

Introduction

The Kentucky General Assembly authorized the Parent and Child Education (PACE) program in 1986 because they believed that there is an "intergenerational cycle" of undereducation caused by limited parental basic skills and attitudes toward education, limitations in children's learning skills, and limitations in parental child care skills. The Division of Adult and Community Education designed the PACE program to remediate these causes of undereducation by providing joint educational services to parents and children. PACE serves parents who lack a high school diploma or equivalency, and their children aged 3 and 4. Program services include adult basic education for the parents, instruction in parenting skills, early childhood education, and joint parent-child interaction and learning. PACE funds are available on a competitive basis to school systems in Kentucky counties where more than 50% of the adults lack a high school diploma or equivalency (Heberle, 1988).

PACE has developed a reputation as a highly innovative and effective program and has drawn interest from diverse groups both in Kentucky and nationally. In addition to state funding provided by the General Assembly, the Ford Foundation and the Kennedy School of Government have funded certain dissemination activities beyond the scope of the current program and the Kenan Family Charitable Trust has funded a project to replicate the PACE model outside of the Department of Education (Heberle, 1989).

PACE staff have not made a formal statement of the underlying model, but informational materials about the program imply specific and elaborate causal relationships among family educational history, family attitudes about education, childrearing practices, and the expected educational outcomes of children whose parents are poorly educated (Kentucky Department of Education, 1987a; Heberle, 1988, 1989; Weiss, 1988). PACE materials imply two types of causal relationships. The first type of relationship which theorizes about the effect of family variables on children's educational outcomes will be labeled the "explanatory model". The second which makes statements about the expected benefits of PACE instruction will be labeled the "prevention/remediation model". A description of these two models follows.

THE EXPLANATORY MODEL

1. Individuals whose parents have negative attitudes and expectations about education are more likely to perform poorly in school than individuals whose parents do not have these negative attitudes.

2. Children whose parents present poor educational role models are more likely to perform poorly in school than children who have good parental role models.

3. Some parental styles are more likely to produce children who perform poorly in school than are others.

4. Children who evidence deficiencies in learning skills in the preschool years are more likely to perform poorly in school than individuals who do not evidence these deficiencies.

THE PREVENTION/REMEDIATION MODEL

5. Positive changes in parental basic skills will improve children's school performance.

6. Parental modeling of positive attitudes and behaviors about education will improve children's school performance.

7. Positive changes in parenting skills will improve children's school performance.

8. Improvements in preschool learning skills will improve children's school performance.

9. Services delivered during a critical preschool time period will have a significant long-term effect on children's school performance.

10. A combination of services provided simultaneously to parents and children will be more effective than presentation of the same services by different providers on different occasions.

Following more than a year of program operation PACE staff identified among other problems the initial lack of funds for evaluation. Since then they have turned to various post hoc evaluational procedures (Kim, 1987, 1989; Townley, 1987) which have failed to provide a clear analysis of the performance of the program. To remedy this problem the Division of Community Education requested that the Office of

ABSTRACT
PARENT AND CHILD EDUCATION
BREAKING THE CYCLE OF UNDEREDUCATION
1989 SUMMER CONFERENCE
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE CHANGING WORLD

The PACE program was initiated in Kentucky in 1986 as an effort to deal with the state's relatively poor standing in the educational attainment of its population. Program design was based on an implicit theory of casual relationships between family background factors and children's educational and social outcomes. Program services were intended to ameliorate problems of disadvantaged families by remediating the causes of undereducation implied by the theory. There is support in previous research on early-childhood education for the relationship between family background factors and children's outcomes, but these are associational. It has not been shown that family factors cause the outcomes or that remedial services will result in changes in family characteristics. Recent efforts to evaluate the performance of the PACE program have identified elements of this theoretical position and the need for a demonstration of their validity. This paper will describe the PACE program, its implicit theoretical base, and some ideas about how to test the theory.

Jeanne M. Heberle
Terry L. Hipbshmann

June, 1989

THE KENTUCKY PARENT AND CHILD EDUCATION PROGRAM

and

THE PLAN FOR RESEARCH

By Jeanne M. Heberle and Terrance L. Hibpshman

Introduction

The Parent and Child Education program, or PACE, was established by the 1986 Kentucky General Assembly, which allocated $1.2 million for a pilot program for two years in selected districts where 60 percent or more of adults twenty-five and over lacked high school diplomas. The first PACE classes, which were the first of their kind to be offered in public schools in the United States, were begun in six Kentucky classrooms in the fall of 1986. PACE funding was increased by the 1988 General Assembly, which provided $900,000 for each year of the biennium and made districts eligible if at least 50 percent of adults were not high school graduates. PACE is now offered in eighteen classrooms in twelve Kentucky school districts.

The funding of PACE in 1986 can be traced to heightened legislative awareness of formidable barriers to educational and economic improvement in the state. Kentucky has been experiencing economic decline. The state is well above the national averages both for unemployment and for percentages of children living in poverty. Health statistics are poor. Kentucky ranks fiftieth in the nation in the percentage of adults over twenty-five with high school diplomas. Teen pregnancy rates are increasing. Kentucky's

Fifth Congressional District is the poorest congressional district in the country.

Less easily measured, and therefore the hardest to define, assess, and change, is a perceived attitude problem. Too few people in Kentucky trust education as a means for personal or vocational improvement. In recent years, the major topics at educational conferences across the state and nation have included illiteracy, the generational cycle of undereducation, and the positive effects of high-quality early-childhood education. Kentucky's legislative and executive leaders, painfully aware of economic decline in the state and already in a frame of mind to pursue educational reform, saw in the PACE plan an innovative step toward solving a significant part of the state's educational problems.

Goals and Objectives

The goals of PACE are to:

1. Raise the educational level of the parents of preschool children through instruction in basic skills.
2. Provide a role model for the child of parental interest in education.
3. Give parents the skills to help their children succeed in school.
4. Enhance the relationship of the parent and child through planned, facilitated interaction, and thereby demonstrate to parents their power to affect their children's ability to learn.
5. With the informed participation of parents, provide opportunities for children to develop skills antecedent to school success.

The measurable objectives are:

1. Seventy percent of parents in the program will achieve one or more of the following:
   (a) Successfully complete the GED Test.
   (b) Raise skill levels on the Test of Adult Basic Education by two grade levels.
   (c) Enroll in further education or job training programs.
2. Children's performance on appropriate developmental screening scales will improve.

Administrative Design

Parents without high school diplomas who have three- or four-year-old children attend classes in public schools three days a week with their children. They may use public, private, or school transportation. Parents receive training in adult education while the children attend a preschool program. During planned times, parents work with their children in classrooms and have opportunities to help their children learn. When children nap, the parents receive information, support, and encouragement for helping their children succeed, as well as supportive information on such topics as health, vocational education, and job-seeking and retention skills.

Once grants are awarded for PACE programs, the Department of Education retains authority over the curricula, the training, some areas of the budget, and such reporting requirements as enrollment, attendance, and finances. Using guidelines from the state Department of Education, the districts hire, supervise, and evaluate the PACE staff. The department evaluates the programs.

A task force made up of citizens and professionals advises the staff on policies. The task force helped design the entire selection process, the training program, and the research and evaluation system.

In most districts the centers are located in space within the public elementary school. A few are in mobile units, and a few are in neighboring churches or buildings. There are separate classrooms for the adults and children, usually near each other. If the districts meet stated criteria, the schools may ask for 1 percent of total funding for indirect costs to help with space costs, based on a total budget of $50,000 per unit. The amount of $4,000 per unit is allocated for training costs.

All the programs are situated in rural areas with a higher-than- average rate of unemployment. The criteria for enrollment are being without high school credentials and having a three- or four-year-old child. Most of the participants are unemployed, white, female, and between the ages of twenty and thirty. There are a few men and minorities. Fewer than half receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Participation is voluntary. There are no age or income restrictions, and guardians or grandparents also qualify to participate.

Educational Components

The educational components of the program are:

Adult education. Parents receive training in basic language and math skills and social studies. Those with an adequate academic foundation receive instruction to prepare them for the General Educational Development test. In addition, parents receive instruction in job-seeking and retention and general life skills.

Reading, writing, language, listening. The focus is on instilling the skills, the usefulness, and the enjoyment of language. Parents and children are involved separately and together in emergent literacy activities. Parents write and read predictable or repetitious books for the children, and children write stories and books to read to the parents.

Parental support. Adults are trained in skills that enable them to support and encourage their children's abilities to succeed in school. For the parental curriculum, a Minnesota program, Family Oriented Structured Preschool Activities, was selected, with some adaptations as needed. FOSPA is a nationally validated program that is consistent in its design with the High/Scope program for preschool children. Further adaptation is being undertaken by the Family Research Coalition of Chicago in collaboration with the PACE staff.

Children's class time. The children attend a high-quality, developmentally appropriate preschool class for two and a half hours. The High/Scope Educational Model, also a nationally validated program, was adopted.

Staffing

The teaching staff is selected at the local level. The adult education teacher must hold a current Kentucky teaching certificate. Members of the early-childhood staff, who also implement the parental support program with the adult education staff, need not be certified but must meet specified criteria of education and experience. Salaries are determined by district standards.

Curriculum and Training

The curriculum and training in PACE are interdependent. The methodology is as important as the content. The methods used by teacher trainers are planned as demonstrations for teachers to use with parents and ultimately for parents to use within their families. Since knowledge alone does not change behavior, it is assumed that learner participation is a more powerful methodology than teacher-directed instruction. In other words, the training itself is part of the total family support and literacy curriculum.

As an additional reflection of the family emphasis in curriculum, the major areas — language, math, and computer skills — are designed for use by parent and child together. Teachers are trained not only in adult basic education, parental support skills, and early-childhood education but in family literacy, family math, and family computer use. Parents can learn to share the enjoyment and power of language, math, and computers with their children. That shared enjoyment is associated with school success.

We assume parents want success for their children. We think we know some of the ways to help them get it. Throughout the PACE program, the message to parents is that there are ways to increase the chances of success and that all the participants will be actively using those ways together. Knowledge is presented through shared control and responsibility for learning, and everyone learns from one another.

Recruitment

Recruitment was more of a challenge than anticipated. Many undereducated adults do not see education as a way out of an unsatisfactory situa-

tion. Increasing entitlement programs or bringing more jobs into the community is what makes immediate sense. Many do not experience or witness immediate benefits from education. Their classroom experiences may seem irrelevant to their situation. They were either hired without an education or laid off because of lack of work in the community. Those who do get an education often leave the community because of that lack of work, and families are painfully aware of that. Also, in general, husbands are not enthusiastic about changes in family routines.

We try to design recruitment methods with all the above in mind, but especially with a focus on family coherence. A large part of the effort is to convince all members of the family of the benefits of the program.

Recruitment methods include word of mouth, community leadership contact, social-service agencies, news media, and formation of local advisory committees. Brochures and posters go in laundromats, grocery stores, post offices, welfare and social-service offices, discount or dime stores, and wherever! The Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources cooperates, and the local Head Start programs have agreed to share information.

As our awareness of the obstacles increased, recruitment became a much more important element of our design. PACE is now piloting a home-based introduction to the program through which reluctant enrollees come to the center gradually. In addition, the participation requirements of recent welfare reform legislation may alleviate the recruitment problem.

Key Elements

The PACE program is unique. It has some key elements that we consider essential to its effectiveness.

* It directly addresses parents' basic educational and economic needs as a primary method of benefiting the child.
* It involves family members simultaneously.
* It operates outside the traditional boundaries of schooling but is administered by the public schools.
* It is appealing to a broad spectrum of political and social viewpoints.
* It encourages the sustained support of the child and family in the public school, directly addressing the dropout problem.
* It allows the participants to help themselves rather than having something done to or for them.
* It has a strong training component that includes follow-up and support services to the staff.

Results

Approximately five hundred family groups have been enrolled in PACE since 1986. A much higher percentage stay with PACE than with other adult education programs.

Seventy percent of the adults in PACE either received GED certificates or raised their grade levels by at least two years. Parents showed a better understanding of their children's abilities and needs. They believed their children could succeed in school, and that they could help them do so. Graduates had nothing but praise for the PACE program.

On a criterion-referenced scale, PACE preschoolers exhibited measurable developmental gains.

where are these data

Costs

The PACE program costs about $1,000 a year for each participant. Each unit is funded at $50,000 and can serve as many as sixty participants.

Funding

The PACE program is financed entirely by state funds. The state funds are channeled through the Kentucky Department of Education to the districts. Local districts provide classroom space, transportation, the use of their facilities, and supervisory personnel.

Breaking the Cycle

The relationships that develop between parents, teachers, and school administrators as a result of the PACE program can break down the barriers of fear, mistrust, and undervaluing of education. As the adults learn to enjoy their school experience, they can pass their positive attitudes on to their children and others in the community. The children become eager to go to school and better prepared to learn.

Through PACE, school authorities are learning more from families about the causes for dropping out of school and are therefore able to design more effective dropout-prevention programs. PACE parents develop confidence in themselves and in their ability to help their children succeed in school. They recognize their children's abilities and strengths, as well as their own, and are able to help their children build on their strengths. PACE can help parents change their own lives, those of their children, and those of future generations as well.

Recognition

In 1988, PACE received the Innovations in State and Local Government Award from the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

The Parent and Child Education program is supported by the governor, the Kentucky General Assembly, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, the two major state newspapers, and many other civic and educational groups. All recommend that the parent-child program be continued and expanded.

Harvard University'sFamily Research Project is doing an extensive case study of PACE. The program is also the topic of a 1989 doctoral dissertation at the University of Kentucky.

Dissemination

The William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust has established the Kenan Family Literacy Project to set up and research additional parent-child education sites in rural and urban areas, using the PACE program as a basis. The Kenan project is now planning a training center for those wishing to implement PACE programs.

PACE was a model for development of the federal law establishing a national family literacy program, Even Start.

At least five states — Connecticut, Mississippi, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Wisconsin -- are establishing programs essentially similar to PACE, and others are in varying stages of implementation. Inquiries about PACE have come from forty states and two foreign countries.

Summary

PACE was started by three practitioners: a legislator who is also a professor of educational psychology, an adult educator, and an early-childhood educator -- three professionals in different but interrelated fields of education concerned about a critical and far-reaching problem. We understand and respect the need for research and evaluation, and we do not want to risk the misuse of scarce funds. There was enough research to support trying this new concept. We knew that our proposal made sense and that the time was right to seek support for it. The components of our overall idea -- adult education, early-childhood education, and parental involvement -- were being tried in Kentucky, but the state was still losing ground economically and educationally at an even faster rate than it had earlier.

To support our request, we presented what research we knew existed, along with goals, measurable objectives, and a plan to keep track of measurable outcomes. The problem was critical, the solution made sense, we put forth a clear proposal, and the program was funded by the General Assembly. In the first two years, we demonstrably met the goals of increasing the educational levels of the participants. We were able to do what we had said we would do. There was major statewide support for expansion, and in 1988 the program was again funded for two additional years with a $600,000 increase.

However, measurable objectives are not research outcomes. The questions remain: Will reaching these objectives in fact break the cycle of undereducation? Is PACE the most effective and efficient way of addressing that problem? Several states are already trying it, and the Kenan projects are involved in an extensive research effort. The Kentucky Department of Education has developed a research design to examine significant hypotheses

implied by the PACE model. Many agencies considering replication of PACE may want to wait for some outcomes before investing in PACE as a solution to their problems.

Some practitioners find it difficult, however, to wait for definitive research outcomes before proceeding with an appealing idea. In Kentucky, we are seeing this program work in varying kinds of communities with varying kinds of family situations. We are listening to the stories of pride, self-esteem, and family support. We are watching parents find the way to help their children succeed.

We expect PACE to be further expanded in Kentucky. In addition, we are aware of the groundswell of support for this deceptively simple idea, and we know it is going to spread. We are concerned that others may try some variation of PACE and have it fail for lack of the significant elements that make PACE work, or that they may try PACE as a solution to some different problem.

For those reasons, and because we want to provide verifiable evidence of the accomplishments of the PACE program, the Department of Education is designing research to assess the significance of individual elements of the design and the effects of those elements on the identified problems.

PACE is not a panacea. It is a workable idea for family support that can address cyclical undereducation in a variety of family settings, such as urban or rural, among the homeless, or on Indian reservations. PACE does not directly address the problems of poor mental or physical health, drug addiction, the divorce rate, or crime in the streets. It makes the assumption that the design of the model can increase participants' chances to get a better education. It also assumes that a better education can

decrease people's chances of being permanently trapped in a fast-developing underclass that threatens the stability of individual and nation alike.

Jeanne M. Heberle
Coordinator, PACE Program
Division of Community Education
Kentucky Department of Education
1917 Capital Plaza Tower
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
(502) 564-2117

Terrance L. Hipbshman
Researcher
Division of Research
Kentucky Department of Education
317 Capital Plaza Tower
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
(502) 564-3294